

Witness: Dr. David M. Gipp
President
United Tribes Technical College
Bismarck, North Dakota

Hearing: March 18, 2009
10 a.m.

Representing: United Tribes Technical College

Testimony Summary:

- United Tribes Technical College is operated by the five Indian tribes in North Dakota, and has been providing education to Indian students from the Great Plains and around the nation for 40 years. We offer 17 two-year degree and 11 certificate programs.
- UTTC is fully accredited; has an 80% retention rate and a placement rate of 94 %.

Our appropriations requests are authorized in current law:

- \$8.5 million under Section 117 of the Perkins Act, Tribally Controlled Postsecondary Career and Technical Institutions. Perkins funds represent about half of our core funding. We do not have a tax base or state-appropriated funds on which to rely.
- Increased funding under Title III and III-A of the Higher Education Act (developing institutions) for facility construction. UTTC will be applying for funds for to help construct a technology and science building.

UNITED TRIBES TECHNICAL COLLEGE

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Statement on
FY 2010 Department of Education Carl Perkins Act Budget (Section 117) and HEA Title III

Submitted to
House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees on Labor-HHS-Education and Related Agencies

David M. Gipp, President, United Tribes Technical College (UTTC)
Myra Pearson, UTTC Board Chairman and Chairman of the Spirit Lake Tribe

March 18, 2009

For 40 years, United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) has provided postsecondary career and technical education, job training and family services to some of the most impoverished Indian students from throughout the nation. We are governed by the five tribes located wholly or in part in North Dakota. We have consistently had excellent results, placing Indian people in good jobs and reducing welfare rolls. The Perkins funds constitute about half of our operating budget and provide for our core instructional programs for many of our Associate of Applied Science degrees. We do not have a tax base or state-appropriated funds on which to rely.

The request of the United Tribes Technical College Board is for the following authorized programs:

- **\$8.5 million or \$ 727 thousand above the FY 2009 enacted level** for Section 117 of the Carl Perkins Act. These funds are shared via a formula by United Tribes Technical College and Navajo Technical College.
- **Provision of additional funding for Title III and Title III-A of the Higher Education Act (HEA) that provide construction funds for facilities at institutions of higher education (Title III) and at tribally controlled colleges (Title III-A).** For example, UTTC needs an additional \$10.9 million to complete the construction of a new science and technology building towards which UTTC already has obtained \$3 million.

The students who attend UTTC are from Indian reservations from throughout the nation, with a significant portion of them being from the Great Plains area. Our students come from impoverished backgrounds or broken families. They may be overcoming extremely difficult personal circumstances as single parents. They often lack the resources, both culturally and financially, to go to other mainstream institutions. Through a variety of sources, including funds from Section 117 of the Carl Perkins Act, UTTC provides a set of family and culturally-based campus services, including: an elementary school for the children of students, housing, day care, a health clinic, a wellness center, several on-campus job programs, student government, counseling, services relating to drug and alcohol abuse and job placement programs. The Carl Perkins funds we receive are essential to our students' success.

Perkins Authorization. Section 117 of the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act (20 U.S.C. Section 2327) is the source of authorization of Perkins funding for UTTC. Section 117 is entitled “Tribally Controlled Postsecondary Career and Technical Institutions.” First authorized in 1991, Congress has continued this authorization in the subsequent reauthorizations of the Perkins Act. Funding under this Act has in recent years been distributed on a formula basis to UTTC and to Navajo Technical College.

Despite the explicit Congressional authorization for Carl Perkins funding for Section 117, and despite the Administration’s requests for funding for Section 117 in all previous years, the Bush Administration requested nothing for this program for FY 2009. We are pleased that Congress recognized the value of UTTC’s programs, and instead gave a priority to UTTC and Navajo Technical College by appropriating a \$227,000 increase for Section 117 Perkins in the recently enacted Omnibus Appropriations bill for FY 2009. However, in the process our Section 117 program was listed as an earmark, despite the authorization for the appropriated amount. As a continuing, authorized Native American serving program, we should not be considered an earmark.

UTTC Performance Indicators. United Tribes Technical College has:

- An 80 percent retention rate.
- A placement rate of 94 percent (job placement and going on to four-year institutions).
- A projected return on federal investment of 20-to-1 (2005 study comparing the projected earnings generated over a 28-year period of UTTC Associate of Applied Science and Bachelor degree graduates of June 2005 with the cost of educating them).
- The highest level of accreditation. The North Central Association of Colleges and Schools has accredited UTTC again in 2001 for the longest period of time allowable – ten years or until 2011- and with no stipulations. We are also one of only two tribal colleges accredited to offer accredited on-line (Internet based) associate degrees.
- More than 20 percent of our graduates go on to four-year or advanced degree institutions.

We also note the January 13, 2009, report of the Department of Education’s Office of Vocational and Adult Education on its recent site visit to UTTC (October 7-9, 2008). While some suggestions for improvements were made, the Department commended UTTC in many areas: for efforts to improve student retention; the commitment to data-driven decision-making, including the implementation of the Jenzabar system throughout the institution; the breadth of course offerings; collaboration with four-year institutions; expansion of online degree programs; unqualified opinions on both financial statements and compliance in all major programs; being qualified as a low risk grantee; having no reportable conditions and no known questioned costs; clean audits; and use of the proposed measurement definitions in establishing institutional performance goals.

The demand for our services is growing and we are serving more students. For the 2008-2009 year we enrolled 1023 students (an unduplicated count), nearly four times the number served just six years ago. Most of our students are from the Great Plains, where the Indian reservations have a jobless rate of 76 percent (Source: 2003 BIA Labor Force Report), along with increasing populations. These statistics dramatically demonstrate the need for our services at increased levels for at least the next ten years.

In addition, we are serving 141 students during school year 2008-2009 in our Theodore Jamerson Elementary school and 202 children, birth to five, are being served in our child development centers.

UTTC course offerings and partnerships with other educational institutions. We offer 17 accredited vocational/technical programs that lead to 17 two-year degrees (Associate of Applied Science (AAS)) and eleven (11) one-year certificates, as well as a four year degree in elementary education in cooperation with Sinte Gleska University in South Dakota.

Licensed Practical Nursing. This program has one of the highest enrollments at UTTC and results in the greatest demand for our graduates. Our students have the ability to transfer their UTTC credits to the North Dakota higher educational system to pursue a four-year nursing degree.

Medical Transcription and Coding Certificate Program. This program provides training in transcribing medical records into properly coded digital documents. It is offered through the college's Exact Med Training program and is supported by Department of Labor funds.

Tribal Environmental Science. Our Tribal Environmental Science program is supported by a National Science Foundation Tribal College and Universities Program grant. This five-year project allows students to obtain a two-year AAS degree in Tribal Environmental Science.

Community Health/Injury Prevention/Public Health. Through our Community Health/Injury Prevention Program we are addressing the injury death rate among Indians, which is 2.8 times that of the U.S. population, the leading cause of death among Native Americans ages 1-44, and the third leading cause of death overall. This program has in the past been supported by the Indian Health Service, and is the only degree-granting Injury Prevention program in the nation. Given the overwhelming health needs of Native Americans, we continue to seek new resources to increase training opportunities for public health professionals.

Online Education. Our online education courses provide increased opportunities for education by providing web-based courses to American Indians at remote sites as well as to students on our campus. These courses provide needed scheduling flexibility, especially for students with young children. They allow students to access quality, tribally-focused education without leaving home or present employment. However, we also note the lack of on-line opportunities for Native Americans in both urban and rural settings, and encourage the Congress to devote more resources in this area.

We offer online fully accredited degree programs in the areas of Early Childhood Education, Community Health/Injury Prevention, Health Information Technology, Nutrition and Food Service and Elementary Education. Over 80 courses are currently offered online, including those in the Medical Transcription and Coding program. We presently have 50 online students in various courses and 137 online students in the Medical Transcription program.

We also provide an online Indian Country Environmental Hazard Assessment program, offered through the Environmental Protection Agency. This is a training course designed to help tribes understand how to mitigate environmental hazards in reservation communities.

Computer Information Technology. This program is at maximum student capacity because of limitations on resources for computer instruction. In order to keep up with student demand and the

latest technology, we need more classrooms, equipment and instructors. We provide all of the Microsoft Systems certifications that translate into higher income earning potential for graduates.

Nutrition and Food Services. UTTC helps meet the challenge of fighting diabetes and other health problems in Indian Country, such as cancer, through education and research. Indians and Alaska Natives have a disproportionately high rate of type 2 diabetes, and have a diabetes mortality rate that is three times higher than the general U.S. population. The increase in diabetes among Indians and Alaska Natives is most prevalent among young adults aged 25-34, with a 160 percent increase from 1990-2004. (Source: FY 2009 Indian Health Service Budget Justification). Our research about native foods is helping us learn how to reduce the high levels of diseases in our communities.

As a 1994 Tribal Land Grant institution, we offer a Nutrition and Food Services AAS degree in order to increase the number of Indians with expertise in nutrition and dietetics. Currently, there are very few Indian professionals in the country with training in these areas. Our degree places a strong emphasis on diabetes education, traditional food preparation, and food safety. We have also established the United Tribes Diabetes Education Center that assists local tribal communities, our students and staff to decrease the prevalence of diabetes by providing educational programs, training and materials. We publish and make available tribal food guides to our on-campus community and to tribes.

Business Management/Tribal Management. Another critical program for Indian country is business and tribal management. This program is designed to help tribal leaders be more effective administrators and entrepreneurs. As with all our programs, curriculum is constantly being updated.

Job Training and Economic Development. UTTC continues to provide economic development opportunities for many tribes. We are a designated Minority Business Development Center serving South and North Dakota. We administer a Workforce Investment Act program and an internship program with private employers in the region.

South Campus Development. The bulk of our current educational training and student housing is provided in 100 year old buildings, part of a former military base used by UTTC since its founding in 1969 and donated to us by the U.S. in 1973. They are expensive to maintain, do not meet modern construction and electrical code requirements, are mostly not ADA compliant, and cannot be retrofitted to be energy efficient.

As a result, UTTC has developed plans for serving more students in new facilities that will provide training and services to meet future needs. We are now developing land purchased with a donation that will become our south campus. Infrastructure for one-fourth of the new campus has been completed, and we have now obtained partial funds for a new, and badly needed, science, math and technology building. *We need an additional \$10.9 million to help complete this building.* Our vision for the south campus is to serve up to 5,000 students. We expect that funding for the project will come from federal, state, tribal and private sources. Without additional funding for Titles III and III-A of the Higher Education Act, that provide construction funds for campuses such as ours, many students will be denied the opportunity for higher education.

Our Department of Education funds are essential to the operation of our campus. Our programs at UTTC continue to be critical and relevant to the welfare of Indian people throughout the Great Plains region and beyond. Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies

Witness Disclosure Form

Clause 2(g) of rule XI of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires non-governmental witnesses to disclose to the Committee the following information. A non-governmental witness is any witness appearing on behalf of himself/herself or on behalf of an organization other than a federal agency, or a state, local or tribal government.

Your Name, Business Address, and Telephone Number:

David M. Gipp, President
United Tribes Technical College
3315 University Drive
Bismarck, ND 58504 – Tel. 701-255-3285 ext. 1218

I am a governmental witness. United Tribes Technical College is operated by the five tribal governments of N.D. under a Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance contract with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (Contract No. CTA90X35608) and is therefore considered a tribal organization. This is the practice of the Interior Appropriations Subcommittee which treats tribal organizations operating under the Indian Self-Determination law as tribal governments. President Gipp is testifying on behalf of the Tribal Governments that operate United Tribes Technical College.

1. Are you appearing on behalf of yourself or a non-governmental organization? Please list organization(s) you are representing.

I am appearing on behalf of a governmental organization. See the above statement.


2. Have you or any organization you are representing received any Federal grants or contracts (including any subgrants or subcontracts) since October 1, 2006?

Yes No

3. If your response to question #2 is "Yes", please list the amount and source (by agency and program) of each grant or contract, and indicate whether the recipient of such grant or contract was you or the organization(s) you are representing.

See the above statement.

Signature:



Date: March 13, 2009

Please attach a copy of this form, along with your curriculum vitae (resume) to your written testimony.

David M. Gipp
United Tribes Technical College President

David M. Gipp is President of United Tribes Technical College, an intertribal, postsecondary technical college for American Indian students and their families in Bismarck, N.D. He was associated with the college during its founding by North Dakota tribal leaders between 1969 and 1972 and was named president of it on May 2, 1977.

Born in Fort Yates, ND, Gipp is an enrolled member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. His Hunkpapa Lakota name is Wicahpi Isnala translates to Lone Star.

He earned an education at the University of North Dakota (1969) and holds a Doctorate in Laws, Honoris Causa, from North Dakota State University (1991) for his contributions in developing tribal higher education policy. He has been selected for numerous national and community awards.

His professional work since 1972 has been principally in the development of tribal colleges. He was instrumental in creating the first national legislation (1978) to assist tribally controlled community colleges. He has extensive background in vocational and higher education and has served on the U.S. Department of Labor Native American Employment and Training Council (1978-2005).

Among other posts, President Gipp is the past Executive Director (1973-1977) and President of the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (1978-1980, 1991-1993, 1999-2000, 2001-2003) and past Chair of the American Indian College Fund (2002, 2003-2004, 2005) and current Chair of the University of North Dakota INMED Advisory Council. He was the 1995 Indian Educator of the Year of the National Indian Education Association and 1997 North Dakota Multi Cultural Educator of the Year. Most recently he was named the Champion of Liberty by the ACLU of North Dakota (2008).

North Dakota Governor John Hoeven appointed him to the North Dakota Workforce Development Council, the North Dakota State Commission on National and Community Service and the North Dakota Quarter Design Selection Committee. He served on the Bismarck Mayor's Committee on Human Relations. He is a member of the Lewis & Clark Regional Development Council and numerous other boards.

President Gipp oversees all aspects of the college, which is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and offers 17 career/technical programs and 24 two-year degrees and on-year certificates.

United Tribes Technical College, 3315 University Drive, Bismarck, ND 58504, www.uttcc.edu